

of man to God. Only the consequences of our sin could touch his righteous soul.

Notwithstanding its unscripturalness, very many continue to teach that Jesus offered himself as a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice. But to suggest that anything must be done to satisfy divine justice in order that divine love may operate, is to array one attribute of God against another. His love is as much from everlasting as his justice is. Hence to assume that something was needed to satisfy his justice is to assume that something was antecedent to his love, which is utterly inconceivable. Since he is a perfect Being, his love and his justice are the same thing, because they are both dispensed with absolute righteousness. Everything the Deity does is the manifestation or expression of benevolence; and, as redemption is the outcome of benevolence, the attribute of mercy, which prompts him to pardon, must precede atonement.

A fourth formal explanation may be called the commercial theory. The foregoing theories are all commercial in a sense, because they all regard atonement as the payment of a debt; but among later writers the payment is expressed in a much grosser form. Some of them, for example, maintain that in order to afford a perfect satisfaction, Christ experienced the wrath of God, the curse of the law, and the pangs of hell; and one of them, Quenstedt, declares that "Christ was substituted